

Farewell to MSC Opera, MSC Sinfonia returns

South Africans say a final farewell to MSC Opera on 28 March 2015, as the popular vessel departs Cape Town and begins its 23 Night Grand Voyage up the West Coast of Africa to her final destination of Venice, Italy.

MSC Opera has been a popular holiday choice for South Africans over the past five months attracting an impressive 99.9% average occupancy for the season. One of the most successful seasons to date with passengers voting unanimously to recommend MSC Cruises to family and friends in the future.

The local 2014/15 season, though only hosting one ship, still saw a notable +80 000 passengers choose MSC as their preferred holiday option.

Highlights of the season from a passenger perspective would be the huge improvements made to the infrastructure on Portuguese Island which have created a resort type atmosphere with all the comforts one would expect at a beach resort. Improvements include increased decking under shade for the restaurant, new kitchens for the ships chefs, new bathrooms, a beach Bar, fun zone, Jungle Gym and the exclusive Beach Club where one can relax on your own deck chair under an umbrella with a cold drink from the private bar.

The introduction of the "MSC Flamingo" a new landing craft especially commissioned in Cape Town by MSC to whisk up to 80 passengers at a time in their comfortable seats from the ship to the Island in record time has revolutionised the way passengers get ashore for their island day. The Flamingo has proved so successful that another two craft have been ordered in preparation for the arrival of the New larger MSC Sinfonia in November.

MSC Sinfonia returns

The 2015/16 season will see the return of South Africa's favourite MSC Sinfonia but a newer and larger vessel than we are familiar with following a recent major renovation and refit.



MSC Sinfonia, currently at the Fincantieri's shipyard in Sicily undergoing stretching as part of the Renaissance programme

MSC Sinfonia entered dry dock in January 2015 as part of MSC's Renaissance programme which in a miracle of engineering saw the vessel cut in two to make way for a 24 metre pre constructed extension to her midsection containing an extra 193 cabins capable of accommodating an additional 500 passengers. Other features include more shops, bars, lounges and special features designed specifically for the South African market.

Families will enjoy the new purpose-built areas for children created in partnership with Chicco and LEGO, and a new Baby Club, Mini Club, Young Club and Teens Club.

The new Spray Park on deck 13 will entice any water lover with a series of playful water features and jets.

MSC Sinfonia will depart Genoa on 25 October, taking the scenic East Coast route direct to Durban. The 25 Night Grand Voyage will visit 10 ports in 7 countries including Italy, Greece, Egypt, Jordan, Seychelles, Mauritius, Reunion and finally South Africa.

Sales for the upcoming season are open, with 70% of the Christmas holidays having already been sold. Cruise enthusiasts are urged to book early to experience the new MSC Sinfonia splendour.

Cruising remains one of South Africa's most popular and affordable getaways, with accommodation, meals and entertainment all included in the fare. Early booking incentives up to 50% are still available for the 2015/16 season.

For more, go to www.msccruises.co.za

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